

Knowledge-based planning for innovation systems and agricultural research for development: the case of SABRN

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Introduction

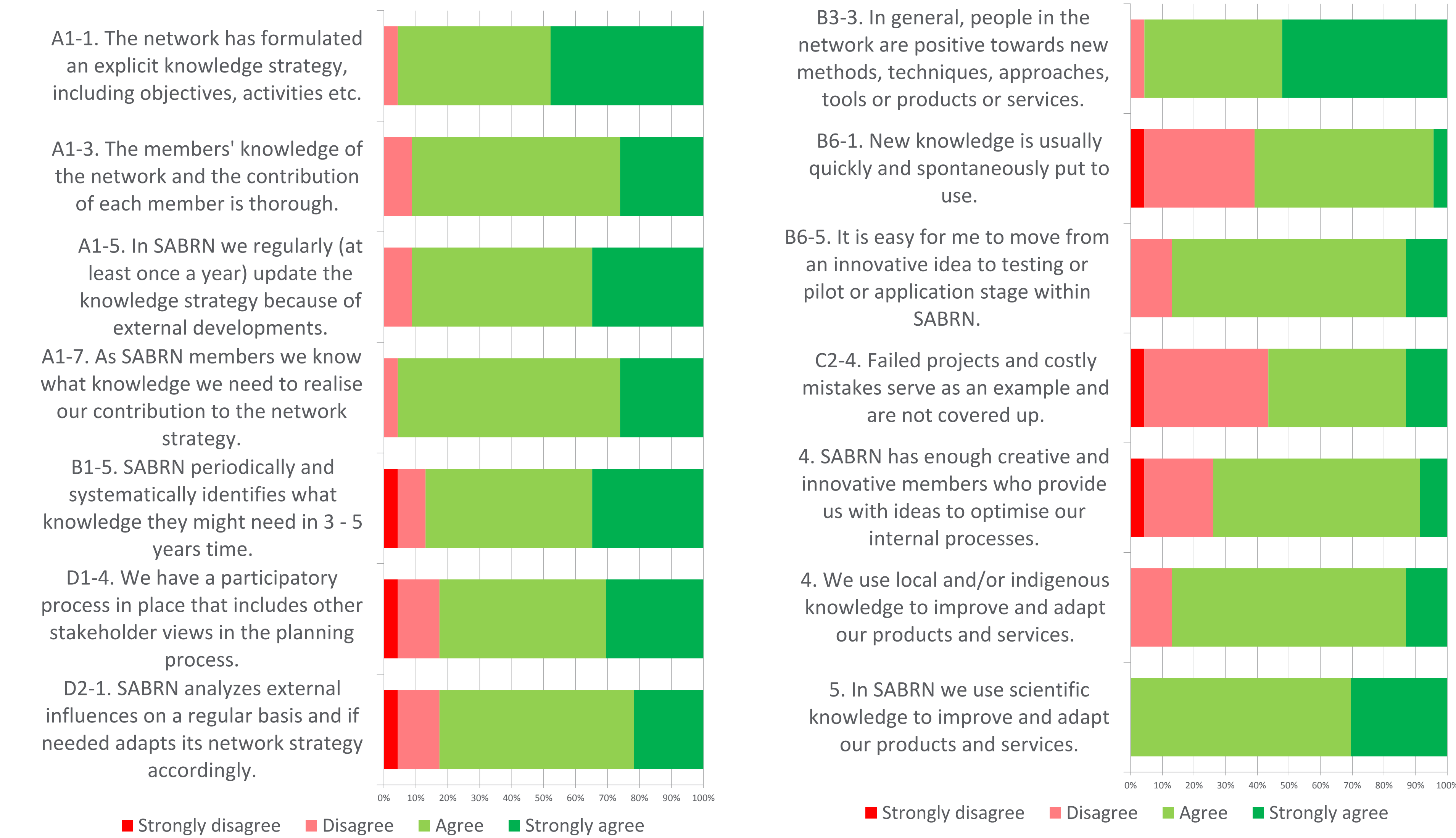
In recent decades, R&D investments in SSA have increased, leading to growth in research and expenditures. In AR4D concepts and approaches, which include innovation platforms (IPs), have evolved into important opportunities for innovations and more exploitation of multi-stakeholder engagements.

A prominent approach that has become popular for planning, evaluation and learning of IPs is the theory of change (ToC). ToC is developed from a process of constructive dialogue, strategic choices and analyses of outcomes. This approach is responsible for the results perspective observed in most IPs.

In the context of IPs, RBM is a strategy for promoting the use of evidence and performance to inform decisions, and fulfill accountability obligations.

However the concept of results perspective and innovation do not readily co-exist in IPs.

Outcomes



Methods

A Knowledge management scan by CTA & Co-Capacity, was used to assess knowledge and knowledge management at network level. The method determined the knowledge status of 22 value propositions on knowledge management, grouped into five clusters.

Each value proposition was measured through a set of seven questions. The survey was administered online to 23 members of SABRN comprised of bean team leaders, national researchers and scientists from CIAT that actively support bean research in Southern Africa.

Data collection was based on an ordinal four point scale, converted into numerical equivalents. Results were validated and prioritized for a KM plan by 18 respondents using FGDs in a SABRN planning workshop.

Observations

- ☐ Most precise & measurable AR4D programs are least transformational, while those that are most transformational are least measured: learning is key to innovation.
- ☐ To nurture innovation, program planning processes are aimed at embedding, harmonizing strategic plans, Learning M&E within regional, national, sector, donor plans and creating multiple levels of feedback.
- ☐ A knowledge management plan, and theory of change simplify linkages between innovation support systems. (communication, information, learning, M&E, and documentation of the innovation process).
- ☐ Mutually defined incentives are important motivators